

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND FAMILY SERVICES
Division of Health Care Financing
1 W. Wilson St.
Madison WI 53702

To: Food Stamp Handbook Holders

From: Cheryl McIlquham, Director
Bureau of Health Care Eligibility

Re: **FS Handbook Release 04-01**

Release Date: April 9, 2004

Effective Date: April 9, 2004

EFFECTIVE DATE

The following policy additions or changes are effective **04/09/04**, unless otherwise noted. **Bold text in the new policy section denotes new text. Text with a strike through it in the old policy section denotes deleted text.**

POLICY CHANGES

Intro Unit Overview
Review Date Section

Effective 02/28/04

Old Policy:
Review Date

You must review a FS group's eligibility within certain time frames. ~~Food Units with no earned income that only include individuals who are elderly, blind, or disabled must be reviewed every 12 months. All other food units must be reviewed every 6 months.~~

New Policy: (Effective 02/28/04)

Review Date

You must review a FS group's eligibility within certain time frames. **Effective February 28, 2004, most FS food units will be certified for 12 months. Food units that include a migrant or seasonal farm worker, and food units who are homeless at the time of application or recertification will continue to be certified for 6 months. These food units are subject to reduced change reporting policy.**

Food units that include only elderly, blind or disabled individuals (EBD) with no reported earnings will continue to be certified for 12 months with no change in their change reporting requirements.

FS Group Unit Q. 8

A statement was added to this section on Categorical Eligibility that explains the Workforce Attachment and Advancement (WAA) has ended and there will be no more people enrolled as of June 30, 2004.

New Policy:

Note: The WAA program ended 12/31/03 and there will be no more people enrolled as of 06/30/04.

Review Date Unit Q. 1

New Policy: (Effective 02/28/04)
If no, go to 2.

Review Date Unit Q. 2	<p><u>New Policy</u> (Effective 02/28/04) Does the food unit include a migrant or seasonal farm worker? If yes, review in 6 months. If no, go to 3.</p>
Review Date Unit Q. 3	<p><u>New policy:</u> (Effective 02/28/04) Is the food unit homeless? If yes, review in 6 months If no, review in 12 months.</p>
01.01.02	This section on "Family Group" was deleted since the information is found in 01.02.02.
01.02.01	<p>Step-parent was defined.</p> <p><u>New Policy:</u> Step-parent: The spouse of a parent who is not the biological parent of a child. A step-parent that is divorced from a biological parent is no longer considered a step-parent.</p>
01.03.01	<p>A statement was added to this section on Categorical Eligibility that explains the Workforce Attachment and Advancement (WAA) has ended and there will be no more people enrolled as of June 30, 2004.</p> <p><u>New Policy:</u> <u>Note:</u> The WAA program ended 12/31/03 and there will be no more people enrolled as of 06/30/04.</p>
12.02.01.01	<p><u>Old Policy:</u> There are two change reporting policies, depending on the recertification period of the AG.</p> <p>1) FS AGs with six month reviews will only be required to report if the total monthly gross household income exceeds 130% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL). This change must be reported by the 10th of the month following the month in which the income exceeded 130% of the FPL. See 18.01.02.</p> <p>2) FS AGs with 12 month reviews (EBD AGs with no earnings in the AG) must report a change of more than \$50 a month in unearned income or a change in source of the unearned income. Both changes must be reported to the FS Agency within 10 days of the date the change is known to the household.</p> <p>Child Support Exception: Changes in child support income of \$100 or more must be reported within 10 days for AGs with 12 month review dates. Changes of less than \$100 in child support, family maintenance, alimony, or child support arrears need not be reported.</p> <p><u>New Policy:</u> (Effective 02/28/04) There are two change reporting policies, depending on the type of the AG.</p> <p>1) FS AGs that include only Elderly, Blind, or Disabled (EBD) individuals with no earnings must report a change of more than \$50 a month in unearned income or a change in source of the unearned income. Both changes must be reported to the FS Agency within 10 days of the date the change is known to the household.</p>

Child Support Exception: Changes in total child support income of \$100 or more per month must be reported within 10 days. Changes of less than \$100 per month in total child support, family maintenance, alimony, or child support arrears need not be reported.

2) All other FS AGs will only be required to report if the total monthly gross household income exceeds 130% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) for the food unit size. This change must be reported by the 10th of the month following the month in which the income exceeded 130% of the FPL. See 18.01.02.

12.02.36

Old Policy:

~~Count net Social Security income. Use CARES screen AFMD to add any Medicare premium to the benefit amount that is actually received.~~

New Policy:

Policy - Count total gross income from Social Security payments less any repayments withheld due to previous overpayments of Social Security benefits. See Appendix 12.02.23 "Repayments"

Procedure - On AFUI, enter total Social Security income after subtracting Medicare premium amounts and repayments due to a previous overpayment of Social Security income.

Enter the buy-in information for the Medicare Part B premium on AFMD. CARES will use this information to determine if the Part B premium amount should be added to the income entered on AFUI in the budget. This will ensure that the Medicare premium amounts are correctly included in the total gross unearned income and correctly budgeted as a medical expense deduction.

Use screen AFSP to deduct any Child Support payments withheld from Social Security payments. This will ensure that Child Support payments are correctly included in the total gross unearned income and correctly budgeted as a Child Support payment deduction. See Appendix 16.05.00 "Child Support"

12.03.01.02

Old Policy:

12.03.01.02 Changes To Earned Income

~~FS groups with 12-month reviews (EBD AGs with no earnings) must report a change in the source of the earned income, such as a new job or beginning self-employment.~~

Changes must be reported to the FS agency within 10 days of the date the change is known to the household, except for reporting receipt of a new job. Then the change must be reported within 10 days from when the jobs starts. Workers must act on all reported changes.

~~FS AGs with six-month reviews~~ will only be required to report if the total monthly gross household income exceeds 130% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL). This change must be reported by the 10th of the month following the month in which the income exceeded 130% of the FPL. See 18.01.02 and 21.01.10. Workers must act on all reported changes

New Policy: (Effective 02/28/04)

FS groups with only individuals that are Elderly, Blind, or Disabled (EBD) and no earnings must report a change in the source

of the earned income, such as a new job or beginning self-employment.

Changes must be reported to the FS agency within 10 days of the date the change is known to the household, except for reporting receipt of a new job. Then the change must be reported within 10 days from when the jobs starts. Workers must act on all reported changes.

All other AGs will only be required to report if the total monthly gross household income exceeds 130% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) for the food unit size. This change must be reported by the 10th of the month following the month in which the income exceeded 130% of the FPL. See 18.01.02 and 21.01.10. Workers must act on all reported changes.

14 Chapter 14 was rewritten to be more clear and to include current CARES processing. No policy was changed. The changes are too numerous to include in the green sheet.

21.02.00 **Old Policy:**
~~Certification periods for most FS AGs is 6 months with the exception of Elderly, Blind, or Disabled (EBD) cases with no earned income. EBD AGs with no earned income in the AG receive a certification period of 12 months. See 25.13 of the Processing Guidelines chapter for change reporting requirements based on the certification period for an AG.~~

New Policy: (Effective 02/28/04)

The certification period of the following food units is 6 months:

- 1) food units that include a migrant of seasonal farm worker, or
- 2) food units that are homeless, and

where action is taken to indicate homelessness or a migrant household member prior to adverse action in month 4 of the certification period.

All other food units have certification periods of 12 months.

21.02.01 This new subsection was added to explain the review date policy for food units that change during a certification period.

New Policy: (Effective 02/28/04)

Changes In Food Unit Type During The Certification Period

Some changes reported and acted on during the first 4 months of the certification period can impact the length of the certification period and/or the interim reporting requirement. Food units that are initially certified for 12 months with an interim reporting requirement, who become homeless, or a migrant has joined the food unit, will have their certification periods shortened to 6 months (from the initial certification date) if the change is acted on prior to adverse action in month 4 of the certification period. These food units will no longer be required to complete a Six Month Interim Report Form (SMIRF), however they will be required to complete a review in the 6th and final month of their certification period to maintain FS eligibility.

NOTE: Once a 6-month certification period has been established the review will remain due in month 6 even if the homeless food unit secures housing, or the migrant worker leaves the food unit prior to the review month.

A food unit that has been certified for 12 months and has a change that causes it to include all elderly, blind, or disabled food unit members with no earned income at any point in the certification period will not have an interim reporting requirement. The food units will also no longer be subject to the reduced reporting requirements, however they are subject to the regular change reporting requirements. Language will be added to the food units' notice of decision identifying the change reporting requirements for the food unit.

The matrix at the end of 25.13 identifies potential changes that may be reported and acted on during the certification period and the impact those changes will have on the length of the certification period and the interim reporting requirement. Remember that all reported changes must be acted on timely in order for the correct certification period and interim reporting requirement to be determined by CARES.

21.03.00

Old Policy:

Certification periods are scheduled every ~~six~~ months for most AGs. In some circumstances an extra month may be added to the certification period by CARES. For Quality Assurance purposes, it is important for the FS case to receive a correct certification period. If CARES adds any extra months to the certification period, change the next review date to ensure a correct certification period.

New Policy:

Certification periods are scheduled every **twelve** months for most AGs. In some circumstances an extra month may be added to the certification period by CARES. For Quality Assurance purposes, it is important for the FS case to receive a correct certification period. If CARES adds any extra months to the certification period, change the next review date to ensure a correct certification period.

21.04.01

New Policy:

Eligibility Reviews for Other Programs and Their Impact on the Food Stamp Certification Period

Reviews completed for other assistance programs do not automatically count as a review for FS and will not change the FS certification period. The new question, "Is this a review for Food Stamps?" has been added to ANRQ. Workers who are completing a face-to-face review for FS must answer this with <Y> for the process to count as a recertification for FS. Workers who are completing a face-to-face review for another program of assistance should answer this with "yes" only when the review should also affect the FS certification period. See 25.13

21.06.00

Section headings were changed slightly in this section.

New Policy:

Change reporting policy depends on the type of assistance group. There are two:

1. **EBD AGs with no earnings, or**
2. **All other AGs**

See 26.00 for change reporting requirements for Transitional Food Stamp (TFS) recipients.

EBD AGs with no earnings

Elderly, Blind, or Disabled (EBD) Assistance Groups are those where all AG members are elderly, blind, or disabled. If no one in this AG has earned income, these AGs are required to report the following changes within 10 days:

1. Number of people in the home:

- When a person is born or dies
- When someone moves in or out

2. Income:

- Unearned: Changes of more than \$50 except child support, in which case it's more than \$100.
- Earned: Changes in the source of income (a new job must be reported within 10 days from the start of the job)

3. Address/Shelter Expense

- New address when a move takes place.
- Change in RENT or MORTGAGE/TAXES/HOMEOWNER'S INSURANCE if a move occurs.
- Change in UTILITY expense obligation, such as phone, lights, or heating, if a move occurs.

4. Resources:

- For Non-Categorically Eligible FS AGs, when total countable assets for all household members exceeds \$3000.

However, if any change is reported by any source for an FS AG, it must be acted upon. See 21.06.01

Changes must be reported to the FS agency within 10 days of the date the change is known to the household, except for reporting receipt of a new job. Then the change must be reported within 10 days from when the jobs starts.

All Other AGs:

All other AGs are only required to report if their total monthly gross income exceeds 130% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) for their reported food unit size. This change must be reported by the 10th of the month following the month in which the total income exceeded 130% of the FPL.

As long as a food unit's total income is less than 130% of the FPL, an AG need not report changes in income, assets, address changes, household composition, etc. See 18.01.02 for the table showing 130% of the FPL.

However, if any change is reported by any source for FS AG, it must be acted upon. See 21.06.01 and 25.13.

If an AG has reported total income exceeding 130% FPL for their food unit size, and the AG remains open for FS due to categorical eligibility, the AG has fulfilled their change reporting requirement for the remainder of the FS certification period.

See 26.00 for change reporting requirements for Transitional Food Stamp (TFS) recipients.

Morgan Chase & Co. CEFS's new name is J.P. Morgan Electronic Financial Services. The name is updated throughout Appendix Chapter 24.

24.02.05

Old Policy:

CARES will order a new QUEST card if the cardholder name changes (this includes any name change) or a cardholder changes.

New policy:

CARES will order a new QUEST card if the cardholder name changes (this includes any name change) or a cardholder changes. **Advise the cardholder that a new card is coming in the mail and that s/he should select a PIN for the new card. S/he should call customer service if s/he does not receive the new card in five business days. The previous cardholder (either the same person with a name change or a different person) should not call customer service to change the PIN for the card in his/her possession as this will cancel the new card.**

24.02.08.04

QUEST cards are returned to the State if the client moved and the card mailing address is the old address. The following sentence was added: If the cardholder has moved, the post office will not forward the QUEST card(s) to the new address.

24.02.12.03

Because J.P. Morgan processing of the emergency demographic and benefit files is taking a longer time to complete, tell the vault cardholder the new time that the card will be usable.

Old policy:

CARES will process emergency demographic and benefit files three times per business day (Monday through Friday):

1. If the expedited case is confirmed in CARES and BIPN completed by 12:00 noon Central Time, the account will be set up on the J.P. Morgan EFS system and the card will be usable by ~~2:00 p.m.~~ Central Time the same day.
2. If the expedited case is confirmed in CARES and BIPN is completed by 3:00 p.m. Central Time, the account will be set up on the J.P. Morgan EFS system and the card will be usable by ~~5:00 p.m.~~ Central Time the same day.

New policy:

CARES will process emergency demographic and benefit files three times per business day (Monday through Friday):

1. If the expedited case is confirmed in CARES and BIPN completed by 12:00 noon Central Time, the account will be set up on the J.P. Morgan EFS system and the card will be usable by **3:00** p.m. Central Time the same day.
2. If the expedited case is confirmed in CARES and BIPN is completed by 3:00 p.m. Central Time, the account will be set up on the J.P. Morgan EFS system and the card will be usable by **6:00** p.m. Central Time the same day.

24.02.12.06

Old policy:

If you need EBT transaction information that is older than 90 days, ~~email the CARES Information & Problem Resolution Center to request this information.~~

New policy:

If you need EBT transaction information that is older than 90 days,

email Judy Woelfel or Tim Burnett.

25.04

Old Policy:

Determine The “Best Estimate” Of Prospective Income

The worker must use the best-verified information available when determining the best estimate of income. ~~If you are unable to obtain verification within the verification timeframe, use the best information available.~~ When the employment or income has been continuous, use the most recent (i.e., at least the last 30 days) pay checks to identify patterns and fluctuations in the income. ~~Several months’ worth of income may have to be examined if there is any fluctuation in the gross amounts.~~ If the client feels that the previous pay stubs do not accurately represent the future and does not agree with the estimate, then additional steps (i.e., agency verification form) must be taken to obtain a more accurate estimate.

Pay stubs can trigger new questions. Are there shift differentials, tips, EITC, overtime, child support deductions, and what are the pay periods? ~~Check year to date figures for discrepancies when using pay stubs to determine prospective income.~~ Remember to watch for pay increases. Year to date totals can also be used to calculate pay stubs that are not provided or are missing between pay periods.

New Policy:

Determine The “Best Estimate” Of Prospective Income

The worker must use the best-verified information available when determining the best estimate of income. When the employment or income has been continuous, **you may use the most recent** (i.e., at least the last 30 days) pay checks to identify patterns and fluctuations in the income. If the client does not have the checkstubs, feels that the previous pay stubs do not accurately represent the future, or does not agree with the estimate, then additional steps (i.e., employment verification form) must be taken to obtain a more accurate estimate.

Pay stubs can trigger new questions. Are there shift differentials, tips, EITC, overtime, child support deductions, and what are the pay periods? Remember to watch for pay increases. Year to date totals can be used to calculate pay stubs that are not provided or are missing between pay periods.

25.13

The Processing Guidelines Appendix was updated to include information from Ops Memo 04-06 *Food Stamp Program Reduced Change Reporting Phase IIA 12 Month Certification and 6 month Interim Reporting*. The changes are too numerous to include in the green sheet.

25.15

The Processing Guidelines Appendix was updated to include information from Ops Memo 04-07 *Transitional Food Stamp Program*. The changes are too numerous to include in the green sheet.

26

The Abbreviations chapter 26 was moved to chapter 27

26

A new chapter called “Transitional Food Stamps” was added here. The changes are too numerous to include in the green sheet. Information was taken from Operations Memo 04-07.

**TYPOS, TECHNICAL,
OR LINK CHANGES**

Shelter and Utilities
Computation Unit
Worksheet

The link to the worksheet was fixed.

01.10.03

A link to the Striker Evaluation Form was fixed.

13.05.01.03

Links on this page were fixed.

22.01.00

A link to the old DES 2303 form was replaced with a link to the new
DWSW 2303 form.